

Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

THE BAPTIST BEYOND PEER

—Gyani Brahma Singh

BAPTISM from Greek *Baptizien* – *Baptien* – lexically means to dip; to christen; to give name to; to immerse in water; to sprinkle or for that matter to administer any potable substance orally to an individual with a view for his initiation, proselytisation or transformation to the faith or church, extant or new and which term equally connotes one's theistic or ethical purification or regeneration from the so-called Original Sin or any subsequent heterodoxical action perpetrated, wittingly or unwittingly, by one in the course of one's day to day life span and one's volition for such a purgatorial or expiatory rite or baptism. And such a sanctimonious ceremonials have universal applicability defying all geographical barriers.

Baptism *Pahul* – Sanskrit – *PAHUR* – Benediction – Amrit Chhakna in the Sikh terminology, cannot claim to be an exclusive rite in the annals of Sikhism. Almost all religion founders, large or small, had been initiating their likely followers, with their own methodology, new or borrowed, for initiation or conversion, into the orbit of their own thought or church. But as the readers will see Sri Guru Gobind Singh's method of initiation to Guru Nanak's extant faith had its exclusive novelty and had not been applied by any preceptor earlier.

However, there had been a belief current centuries earlier that the birth of the Khalsa – Singhs of the Amrits—was a copy of the origin of the Rajputs from the sacred fire kindled on the mountains of Abu in Rajasthan. This is known to the History as the Agnikund Theory and in fact is a mere Mythical Tale.

“Rajputs believe that their ancestors were from the sacred fire that was kindled on the mount of Abu. First of all

Chandu Bardai set forth this story in his book Prithiraj Rasso. According to him when Prashurama had destroyed all the *Kshaterayas* and there were no one left to protect the Brahmins (priests) they assembled and performed a *Yagna* on the mount Abu. They kindled the sacred fire and prayed to God to produce a brave class to protect them. In response to their prayers four great heros sprang out of this sacred fire. These four heros founded the four great Rajput families – Parmars, Parhars, Chalukyas and Chauhans.

The writer of Swans, History of India adds that this is not admissible to many and is taken to be very falacious and fabricated to glorify the Rajputs.

To add Chandu Bardai was a famous court poet of Maharana Prithvi Raj Chauhan and he originally belonged to Lahore.

This cathartical processing or baptism had been termed by Aryans as *Dviyyata* – twice-bornship spiritual rebirth psychic or physical union or surrender of the baptised – disciple or *Chela* with his perceptor or *Guru* till he breathed his last. The rites to achieve this end are *Mundun* tonsoring and *Yajnopovita* wearing of sacred threads *Jenua* or *Janju*. While the *Mundun* is common to both male and female child *Janju* is worn by male child only with varying count of skien according to the Brahmanic *Varana* or caste distinctions. Ritual bathing with water and incantation of relevant Vedic hymns are preliminary requirements.

Zoroasterinism, the ancient church of Iranians or Parsees followers of Maharatu Zoroaster – Zarathushtra – a stem from the Aryan umbragious tree, has similar rites of initiation i. e., wearing of a sacred thread – *Kushti* or *Zunnar* and *Sudhra* – a cotton cloth vest, after purgatory bath with chanting of hymns from holy *Avestha* or *Gatha* – the Parsee Scripture of extinct Zend script. This is taken for granted as rebirth. Maulana Rumi sings in praise of this rite in his celebrated *Masnavis* as :—

Choon dooyam baar Aadamzaada bizaad
Paayey khud bar faraquaaye illithaa nihaad

When the son of Aadam is born a second time
He plants his foot on the head of all evils.

Judaism – the church of Jews followers of Hazrat Abraham (3000 B.C.) and Moses (1400 BC) the Prophets of the ancient Nile valley had similar ceremonials of Baptism by immersion of the male child into water and his circumcision – shearing of the foreskin of the male organ of generation – popularly termed as *Sunnat* under incantation of the sacred text from Tovaait, their holy book and the custom lives undying equally in christianity and Islam.

The practice of female circumcision was also prevalent with aboriginal trines in Africa though its nexus with the rite of Baptism cannot be vouchsafed.

Lord Jesus a – Jew by birth – was baptised by Rabbi – John the Baptist with his complete immersion into the Jordon river prior to his theistic revelations. Being a Jew he had his circumcision rite while a child. Christianity has similar detailed ceremonials of would-be converts after ritual bath. There is an unscientific belief that the Christ was born circumcised.

Jainism – the followers of Tirathanka Aadinath Rikhabdeva – the Jin – the Victor – and his twenty three apostles, ending with Lord Mahaveera, has similar rites of ceremonial bath, wearing of threads by male only with chanting of sacred texts and taking a vow of observance of *Tri-Ratana* – Three Jewels – Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct. Strangely enough the performance is led by a Hindu Brahmin.

Bhuddism – the church or *Tathagata* Gautama Buddha, has similar initiation ceremony after a ritual bath and acclamation by the would-be-disciples of refuge in the Buddha invoking :—

Buddham saranam gachhami
Dhammam saranam gachhami
Sangham saranam gachhami

I take refuge in Buddha, in Dharma and
in Congregation – sangat

Jainism and Buddhism, both though do not have belief in Waheguru (God) as the creator – *Karta – Bharta* Sustainer *Harta Destroyer* of the universe, yet their teachings have good moral fortification.

Confucism, Taoism and Shintoism—religions of the peoples of China, Japan and Mangolia etc. being predominantly offshoots of Buddhism, follow Buddhist practices, including Zen-Dhyan – Buddhism.

Islam – the Quraish Arabian Saabi idolator converts – followers of Hazrat Mohammad – the Arabian Prophet – has similar practices of ritual bath, circumcision of males, incantation of the *Kalma*, LA'ILAHA ILLALLAH MOHAMMAD RASUL-ALLAH and the *Fateh*—first Sura of the Holy Qur'an which includes inalienable belief in the *Nabat* Messengership of Allah – of Hazrat Mohammad and the Day of Judgment *Roz-e-Quyamat* when harking *Soor-e-Israfeel* sound of angel Israfeel's trumpet—the believing-dead shall arise from the graves lying in the state of *Barzakh* (life in grave awaiting call) shall hie for assembly in the plain of *Hashar* – end – to seek Mohammad's pardon and their entry into the Paradise – *Behisht*.

The readers will observe that in each case depicted above use of water and chanting of religious texts are *Sine – Qua – non* alongwith the other complimentary rites.

Sikhism – the church founded by Guru Nanak Dev in the fifteenth century (1469–1539 A.D.) in its inceptive stages followed the mode of baptism prevalent with the Vaisnava and Yogpanthi sects—*Guru Chela* syndrome i. e., drinking Guru's footwash *Charan Pahul* by the would-be-disciples. The Brahimical practice of wearing a sacred thread was vehemently denounced by Guru Nanak and he himself refused to wear it, reasoning its scientific futility.

It is rather curious to note that although throughout the history of diverse practices of baptismal ceremonials, they have potentials to impart a better sense of religiosity and moral

re-armament of the baptised individual, nowhere any such ceremonies seem to be instrumental for the inculcation of the power of self-defence by the baptised in the event of any internal and external aggression or inroads for usurpation of his fundamental rights of mode of worship etc., etc.

On the contrary the Jain as well as Buddhist philosophy of Ahimsa – Paramo – Dharama – primacy to non-killing and the rigid cult of Bhikshuism, both male and female – for the attainment of Mokash, Tureya and Nirvana, became conducive to the promotion of prevalent Brahminical mode of excapism and parasitism on the already famished households, with ultimate political bondage.

And to eliminate this lacuna, Guru Gobind Singh, the Divine Baptist Beyond Peer, the Spirituo Militant Genius introduced his novel method of *Pahul* – baptism of All-Steel under the godly inspiration and guidance of his Waheguru (God) whom he invoked as ALL-STEEL – SARVA-LOH in counter parallelism of Islamic All-Qahaar and All-Jabbaar - The Terrorist and the Ferocious (two out of the Ninety-nine Names of Allah), in the presence of 80,000 devotees who congregated for the purpose, reaching from all the four corners of India bearing all hazards of unsafe journey, on the hills of Anandpur-the City of Bliss, founded by his Guru-Father – Guru Tegh Bahadur who gave his life for the protection of mode of Hindu worship, in Chandni Chauk, Delhi on November, 1675.

Sri Guru Gobind Singh with positively committed and unflinching determination and unswerving self-confidence, for

Sant ubaaran-Dushat sangharan

Upliftment of the righteous

Elimination of the evil-doers.

And awareness of the immediate and long term efficacy of this new and novel scientific mode of baptism, did away with all the extant practices, even of his own Guru ancestors, he obtained pure and fresh water from the nearby river Satluj and put it into a small steel bowl. Adding a small quantity of sugara-puffs-patasa he stirred the liquid with a double-edged sword *Khanda* Bhagaoti or Bhagwati under incantation of *Guru-vaani*.

And this stirring and percussional action of the two steels *Khanda* and *Baata*, under the eerie mystic chanting of the *Guru-Vaani - Shabd* or *Naad Brahma* from the celestial lips of a true *kshaterya* **CHHATRI KO POOT HOUN BAHMIN KO NAHA** (*Dassam Granth-2489*) a *Karmayogi* - seventeenth century counterpart of Lord Krishna, infused into the sweetened potable, a genetic force an invisible Divine Fire - *Agni - Shikha* Spiritual Spark, turning it into an Alchemy - *Rassayan - Amrit* - a Death Defying Nostrum - five times administration of which, orally, through the organ of sight, and through the channels of human antenna—unshorn long hair - electrified the entire being of the baptised - *Amrit Dhaaris* transforming them into **KHALSA - SINGHS** - Spirit Impregnated Saint - Militants - Sant-Sipaahis—fear - free disciples or Sikhs. And the words of Sir Radhakrishna speaks—

“Human spirit when lit by divine fire, is mightier than mighty weapon.”

Guru Sahib showered on them the title of *Panj Piaras*-Beloved Ones and announcing before the huge wondering and spell-bound congregation, he said :—

“*Khalsa mero roop hai Khaas*
Khalse main haun karon Niwas”

In the Khalsa (Pure ones) is my image proper
In the Khalsa do I dwell.

And to end the unparalleled performance and drenched in spiritual - beatitude and grateful towards his *Waheguru*, he uttered the Cry of victory :—

Bolo :— Waheguru ji ka Khalsa
Waheguru ji ki fateh

Say— O, Pure ones of *Waheguru*
It is *Waheguru's* victory (for you onwards)

And the erstwhile Hindu Sikhs and Singhs (Sinhs) became *Guru's Khalsa* in multitudes or gained real and purposeful *Dvijyata - Rebornship* - shorn off their earlier lineage name, caste and vocation.

The learned readers may kindly bear with me to accept, with my humble judgment probing through the unlimited efficacy, potential and resultant achievements of the Guru's *Khalsa Singhs* under the Guru Sahib's living stewardship, during the *Dharma Yudhas* led by Banda Singh Bahadur and the Jathe-dars of the Sikh Misl and even since then the term SIKH is not an exclusive derivative from the Sanskrit word SHISHYA but it takes its militaristic divergence or proneness from Sanskrit term SHIKHA – Vedic *Agni* or Fire as explained above. It has little relevance with Pali SEKHA or Sikheya or Seekha etc. Term SHISHYA does not in any manner carry the connotation or import of *Kshatryata* – valour or chivalry, the attributes of aggressiveness essential for defensiveness in the event of any calamity, natural or man made. And to infuse Kshatryata in the dead bones of spineless people was the prime object of the novel methodology of the baptism.

And this unique *Amrit* dispensation gave a serious blow to the age old decript, yet ineqorably clinging Brahminic caste distinction and indiscrimination, morally unjust, depraved, indefensible and which had injured the human dignity and fractured bonds of human fraternity for long.

And in the words of Maulana Rumi again :—

Hassal ien aamad ke Yaar-E-Jaman Baash

Choun butgar az hajar yaar-e-taraash

The sum total was that the Superhuman Idol-Maker-Guru Gobind Singh – carved an idol – the KHALSA SINGH – friend of one and all out of the neglected and cast-away stone.

This metamorphosis – caterpillar into butterfly, evil into virtue, killing the old man and raising the new man, was the highest grace and gift towards oppressed and the morally depressed humanity. It was a re-materialisation of the eternal teachings of the Gita, strengthening and regenerating of the tumbling Hindu Rashtra for its self-preservation and rebuilding of its solidarity.

Unlike the earlier so many a self-seeking prophets and apostles, this great Leveller of spiritual and ethical inequality and inequity, with his sense of self esteemlessness and abiding faith in his Creator – Waheguru – refused to be accosted as Prameshwar – the Transedental Master :—

*Jo mo ko Prameshwar keh hain
Teh sabh narak kund main parhein
Mein houn Parampurakh ko daasa
Dekhan aaeyo jagat tamaasa.*

Who-so-ever calleth me as Prameshwar
He shall, forsure, fall in the deep hell
I am a servant of the Parampurakh
And have come down to mitness the World-Play,

And through out his life span of almost fortytwo years, he ceaselessly endeavoured for the redemption of the exploited spiritually, socially, politically and ethically, unmindful of the supreme-sacrifices of his kith and kin, far and near from the priestly as well as the Mughal Rule tyranny, a sisyphean effort with glory. And in the words of Thomas Paine :—

“Tyranny like hell is not easily conquered yet
we have consolation with us that harder the
conflict the more glorious the triumph. What
we obtain too cheaply, we esteem too lightly.”

And the historical reality is that the KHALSA – SINGHS flagged the tyrannisers domestic or alien at each level and even to this day KHALSA glory shines in every part of the globe undiminished. In their brief bloodstained history of 500 years, the Sikhs never got anything cheaply and they can safely claim comparatively more mayhemed and dead at the altar of Victory.

And to end this essay, I convey my humble appeal to all my breathern, Sikhs and non-Sikhs Indians alike, not to be oblivious of the glorious deeds and sacrifices of their Gurus and stand steadfast for the solidarity of the country and the nation, For they belonged to no simple history but eterinity. ♦♦